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MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. Carl Duckett

STATINTL

Carl:

Thanks very much for the opportunity to review your Project Officers Handbook. Something like this is certainly in order, and I applaud your efforts in this regard.

I do have one suggestion, but this may not be the place to handle it. In any case, almost without exception when a project from your directorate is submitted to me for approval or recommendation to the Director, the documentation is so voluminous and written in such highly technical terms (at least for me) that I have neither the time nor the ability to cope with it. Even the covering memoranda, plus the PPB comments which accompany them, don't solve my problem. Presumably I am expected to read through reams of contractors' proposals, etc. As you know, quite frequently this results in my asking you or others from your directorate to come and explain the proposal to me. I find almost without exception that your people are very articulate and quite capable of explaining in terms I can understand what the project is about, why it is needed, etc. I always finish by saying, or at least feeling, that if you had told me this in the first place we could have saved a lot of time and trouble.

My point is an obvious one. Why not have a section in this Handbook which requires the Project Officer to produce a very brief description of the project in non-technical terms which the layman can understand. I think this might go a long way toward training your Project Officers to make their presentations in terms which the unwashed can understand and appreciate.

As I said, this is meant to be purely constructive. The Handbook may not be the place to take care of it; you do with it what you like.

L. K. White

STATINTL